

Washington DC - Today, Representatives Kevin McCarthy, Devin Nunes and Jeff Denham announced that the House Natural Resources Committee will move forward with legislative consideration of H.R. 1837, the San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act. The Subcommittee on Water and Power has scheduled the hearing for June 2, 2011, which will be followed by a markup in full committee before the House can consider the proposal.

"This is common sense legislation that aggressively tackles our man-made drought and turns the faucet back on for our local farmers and ranchers. I look forward to the hearing and will continue to work to move this vital legislation through Congress so we can help get people back to work," said Congressman McCarthy.

"The days of hiding behind judges, settling parties, and the promise of a new study have passed. Congress needs to enact laws for the people. That means ending the grip on our water supply by obsessed ideologues whose environmental record can only be measured a success if you count increased human suffering as the goal," said Congressman Nunes.

"Outdated environmental policies have hindered Valley farmers for too long and this hearing is the next step towards ensuring that our farmers have a reliable water source. With sustainable, predictable resources Valley farmers will be able to grow their crops, create jobs and drive our economy," said Congressman Denham.

The hearing will take place on June 2nd at 10:00 AM in room 1324 of the Longworth House Office Building.

The San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act, introduced on May 11, 2011, will restore the efficient operation of the region's water infrastructure in order to maximize benefits to water users and the environment. Key provisions include:

- Bay-Delta Accord

The bill establishes the historic bipartisan Bay-Delta Accord as federal law and will guarantee that water is available to farms, communities, and the environment.

- Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) Reforms

The bill focuses resources on the protection of native species, such as Steelhead, Sturgeon and Salmon. It ends the waste of water resources and establishes long overdue transparency and accountability measures to protect taxpayers.

- San Joaquin River Settlement Repeal and Replace

The bill replaces the San Joaquin River Settlement with a plan that prioritizes a viable fishery, enhanced recreation and reliable water supplies for communities and farms. As a result, American taxpayers are expected save close to \$1 billion.

- Creates Jobs and Economic Growth

The end of regulatory uncertainty and the availability of reliable water supplies are expected to create 25,000 - 30,000 jobs in the region.

- Ends Dominance of Special Interests and Lawsuits

To protect Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP) contractors, the Act ends the dominance of special interests and legal proceedings in the management of the region's water supply so long as the CVP and SWP are operated consistent with the Bay Delta Accord. Furthermore, the Act ensures that neither the Federal nor state government can restrict water supplies below the levels included in the Bay-Delta Accord.

There has been strong bipartisan support for the 1994 Bay-Delta Accord. The below excerpts highlight that support:

The San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act is based on the 1994 Bay-Delta Accord. That agreement was hailed by the Clinton Administration as a model for the settlement of longstanding competing water interests. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt commended the Accord as "a powerful case study"—one that could ultimately save the Endangered Species Act. (San Francisco Examiner - "Deal Could Save Endangered Species Act", December 18, 1994)

Senator Dianne Feinstein offered strong support for the Bay-Delta Accord and takes credit for facilitating the agreement—"The Bay-Delta Accord provides a roadmap for meeting the twin objectives of ecosystem restoration and improved water supply," – Senator Dianne Feinstein. (The CALFED Bay-Delta Authorization Act - A Balanced Law to Improve California's Environment and Water Supply, May 18, 2005)

"As I talk to others wrestling with water issues across the Nation, I cite the Accord as a model for other states... I want to reiterate my continuing support for this consensus process and reaffirm the Department's commitment to work cooperatively to achieve the goals still before you." – John R. Garamendi, Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior (CALFED Bay-Delta Program Press Release - "Mark One-Year Anniversary of Bay-Delta Accord", December 15, 1995)

[It will provide] "an affordable and reliable future water supply." – John R. Wodraska, General Manager, Metropolitan Water District (Los Angeles Times – "Landmark Accord Reached on Use of Bay-Delta Water", December 16, 1994)

Self described environmentalist and champion of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, Rep. George Miller, also praised the Accord— "(The) agreement marks the first time in the 92-year history of federally supported water development in the western United States that all water interests have embraced a comprehensive and scientifically sound approach to water management and species protection," – Rep. George Miller, former chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee (California Biodiversity News – "Bay-Delta Pact Brings Certainty; Stakeholders Plan Long-Term 'Fix'", Spring 1995, Volume 2, Number 3)

Republican Governor Pete Wilson and a variety of competing water interests joined in praising the Bay-Delta Accord. So too did activists from the environmental community— [The accord] "finally secures significant environmental improvements for the Bay-Delta estuary." – John Krautkraemer, Environmental Defense Fund. (Los Angeles Times – "Landmark Accord Reached on Use of Bay-Delta Water", December 16, 1994)